

Travis Fink

Sean Vitti

The West Point Chain

To prevent further British incursions into the upper Hudson River, a proper river fortification was emplaced in the area of West Point. The West Point Chain, as it was dubbed, stretched across the Hudson from West Point to Constitution Island.¹ The chain was 500 yards in length and was made up of two foot long iron chains, 2.25" thick.² Each chain link weighed a total of 114 pounds.³ The purpose of the chain was simple. Any British ship attempting to bypass the fort would be completely stopped by the chain, which was placed north of the fort, and south of Constitution Island. The ship, now stopped by the chain, was at the mercy of the numerous American batteries and cannons set up along the river.⁴ The chain was an effective deterrent, though it was never physically tested as the British never risked a ship to attempt to break the chain.

<http://www.unc.edu/~chaos1/chain.html>

http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/about/pdfs/newsclippings/News_5_3_2003.pdf

¹ "West Point: The Great Chain," *UNC.edu*, accessed April 29, 2010, <http://www.unc.edu/~chaos1/chain.html>.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*